

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
U.S. EMBASSY BRATISLAVA, PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION  
Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)**

**Funding Opportunity Title:** U.S. Embassy Bratislava PAS Annual Program Statement  
**Funding Opportunity Number:** PAS-SVK-FY2024-01  
**CFDA Number – Name:** 19.040 – Public Diplomacy Programs  
**Deadlines for Applications:** Applications are received, and possibly also evaluated, on a “rolling” basis. Indicative intermediate deadlines:  
**January 15, 2024; June 17, 2024**

**A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The U.S. Embassy Bratislava Public Affairs Section (PAS) of the U.S. Department of State is pleased to announce that funding is available through its Public Diplomacy Small Grants Program. This is an Annual Program Statement, outlining our funding priorities, the strategic themes we focus on, and the procedures for submitting requests for funding. Please carefully follow all instructions below.

**Purpose of Small Grants Program:** PAS Bratislava invites proposals for programs that **strengthen societal and cultural ties between the U.S. and Slovakia** through programming that highlights shared values and promotes bilateral cooperation. All programs should include an American cultural element, or connection with American expert/s, organization/s, or institution/s in a specific field that will promote increased understanding of U.S. policy and perspectives. **Project proposals should have an intrinsic public diplomacy objective in support of the Priority Program Areas listed below. Projects with a particular emphasis on activities outside the capital of Bratislava will have a priority.**

**Priority Program Areas:**

- Supporting Slovakia’s transatlantic orientation by addressing hybrid threats, including disinformation and cyber security.
- Supporting Slovakia’s capacity to uphold rule of law anti-corruption efforts and increased transparency.
- Strengthening independent media and journalism and helping to foster critical thinking.
- Promoting economic prosperity, energy security, and entrepreneurship through partnership with the U.S., including innovative approaches to technology.
- Contributing to Slovakia’s efforts to support human rights and foster a culture of tolerance and inclusion of minorities.
- Encouraging women’s empowerment.
- Promoting cross-cultural understanding and supporting highly specialized English language learning in Slovakia.

### **Special Note 1: American Spaces Programing**

PAS Bratislava invites applicants to submit proposals for programs be located at American centers in Banska Bystrica, Kosice and Zilina (<https://www.americanspaces.sk/>).

Preferred, but not exclusive, audiences are educators as well as students. The centers can assist in disseminating information and attracting audiences. The Embassy prefers sustainable longer-term programming over one-off events.

Technical Equipment of the American Spaces:

1. American Center Banska Bystrica, State Scientific Library, Lazovna 9

Projector, screen, free WI-FI coverage, 17 laptops (HP, Intel Core i5, Windows 10, Libre Office), MakerBot Replicator+ 3-D printer, printing material – PLA with various colors, 10 BBC Micro:bit sets, Evo Classroom Ozobot kit (12 bots), VR Headset Oculus Quest 2

2. American Center Kosice, State Scientific Library, Hlavna 10

Projector, screen, WI-FI coverage, 17 laptops (HP, Intel Core i5, Windows 10, Open Office), Maker Bot Replicator 3-D printer, printing material, 10 BBC Micro:bit sets, Evo Classroom ozobot kit (11 bots), Lego Mindstorms Ev3, 3 core sets + 3 extension sets, 2 VR Headset Oculus Quest 2

3. American Center Zilina, Regional Library in Zilina, A. Bernolaka 47

Projector, screen, WI-FI coverage, 12 laptops (ASUS, Intel Core i5, Windows 11, Open Office), Prusa 3-D printer, 15 BBC Micro:bit sets, 15 Micro:bit Cutebot, Evo Classroom ozobot kit (12 bots), 2 VR Headset Oculus Quest 2

We recommend consulting the Embassy before submitting a grant application for an American Space Program via [Bratislava\\_GrantsSlovakia@state.gov](mailto:Bratislava_GrantsSlovakia@state.gov).

### **Special Note 2:**

The Embassy will be celebrating several anniversaries in 2024, to include NATO 20 years, Fulbright Slovakia 30 years, and Slovak National Uprising (SNP) 80 years. We will be happy to welcome applications for related programs, and will give preference to those which are interactive and contain a clear and stated U.S. component.

**Participants and Audiences:**

We seek proposals for geographically and demographically diverse audiences within Slovakia. We will give preference to proposals coming from, or targeting, areas where PAS has no presence (i.e. outside of Bratislava, Banska Bystrica, Kosice and Zilina).

**The following types of programs are not eligible for funding:**

- Programs relating to partisan political activity;
- Charitable or development activities without Public Diplomacy relevance
- Construction programs;
- Fund-raising campaigns;
- Lobbying for specific legislation or programs;
- Scientific research;
- Programs that duplicate existing programs.

**B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION**

Length of performance period: generally, up to 12 months, but no more than 24 months from the proposed project start date. The proposed project start date must be reasonably close to the submission date of the application (generally within 6 months).

Number of awards anticipated: 20 awards (dependent on amounts)

Award amounts: awards may range from a minimum of \$1,000.00 to a maximum of \$24,999.00. However, in exceptional cases and upon prior consent of PAS, awards up to USD 150,000.00 might be considered.

Total available funding for US fiscal year 2024: approx. \$300,000.00

Type of Funding: Fiscal Year 2024 Public Diplomacy Funding (Smith-Mundt Act)

**This notice is subject to availability of funding.**

**Funding Instrument Type:** Fixed Amount Award, Grant, or Cooperative Agreement.

**C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION****1. Eligible Applicants**

The Public Affairs Section encourages applications from U.S. and Slovakia (exceptionally, if justified, also from third countries with a clear link to the U.S. and/or Slovakia):

- Registered not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations.
- Individuals.

- Non-profit or governmental educational or cultural institutions.
- Governmental institutions

For-profit or commercial entities **are not eligible** to apply.

## **2. Cost Sharing or Matching**

Cost sharing is not required.

## **3. Other Eligibility Requirements**

In order to be eligible to receive an award, all organizations must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number issued via [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov) as well as a valid registration on www.SAM.gov. Please see Section D.3 for more information. Individuals are not required to have a UEI or be registered in SAM.gov.

# **D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

## **1. Application Package**

Application forms required below are available at <https://sk.usembassy.gov/education-culture/public-affairs-section-grant-opportunities/small-grants-program/>.

## **2. Content and Form of Application Submission**

Please follow all instructions below carefully. Proposals that do not meet the requirements of this announcement or fail to comply with the stated requirements will be ineligible.

### **Content of Application**

Please ensure:

- The proposal clearly addresses the goals and objectives of this funding opportunity;
- All documents are in English;
- All budgets are in U.S. dollars;
- All pages are numbered; and
- All documents are formatted to A4 paper.

The following documents are **required**:

### **I. Mandatory application forms**

- **SF-424 (*Application for Federal Assistance – organizations*) or SF-424-I (*Application for Federal Assistance --individuals*)**
- **SF424A (*Budget Information for Non-Construction programs*)**

- **SF424B (*Assurances for Non-Construction programs*)** Mandatory for all entities, unless the organization has certified electronically when registering in SAM.gov..

**II. Small Grants Program Application (8 pages maximum; optional template available):** The Application should contain sufficient information that anyone not familiar with it would understand exactly what the applicant wants to do. It **must include all the items below**.

- **Proposal Summary:** Short narrative that outlines the proposed program, including program objectives and anticipated impact.
- **Introduction to the Organization or Individual applying:** A description of past and present operations, showing ability to carry out the program, including information on all previous grants from the U.S. Embassy and/or U.S. government agencies.
- **Problem Statement:** Clear, concise, and well-supported statement of the problem to be addressed and why the proposed program is needed
- **Program Goals and Objectives:** The “goals” describe what the program is intended to achieve. What aspect of the relationship between the U.S. and Slovakia will be improved? The “objectives” refer to the intermediate accomplishments on the way to the goals. These should be achievable and measurable.
- **Program Activities:** Describe the program activities and how they will help achieve the objectives.
- **Program Methods and Design:** A description of how the program is expected to work to solve the stated problem and achieve the goal.
- **Proposed Program Schedule:** The proposed timeline for the program activities. Include the dates, times, and locations of planned activities and events.
- **Key Personnel:** Names, titles, roles and experience/qualifications of key personnel involved in the program. What proportion of their time will be used in support of this program?
- **Program Partners:** List the names and type of involvement of key partner organizations and sub-awardees.
- **Program Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:** This is an important part of successful grants. Throughout the timeframe of the grant, how will the activities be monitored to ensure they are happening in a timely manner, and how will the program be evaluated to make sure it is meeting the goals of the grant?
- **Future Funding or Sustainability** Applicant’s plan for continuing the program beyond the grant period, or the availability of other resources, if applicable.
- **Budget Justification Narrative:** After filling out the SF-424A Budget (above), describe each of the budget expenses in detail. See section *H. Other Information: Guidelines for Budget Submissions* below for further information.

**III. Attachments - optional:**

- E.g. 1-page CV or resume of key personnel who are proposed for the program
- E.g. Letters of support from program partners describing the roles and responsibilities of each partner

### 3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov)

#### Required Registrations:

All organizations, whether based in the United States or in another country, must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and an active registration with the SAM.gov. A UEI is one of the data elements mandated by Public Law 109-282, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), for all Federal awards.

***Note: As of April 2022, a DUNS number is no longer required for federal assistance applications.***

The 2 CFR 200 requires that sub-grantees obtain a UEI number. Please note the UEI for sub-grantees is not required at the time of application but will be required before an award is processed and/or directed to a sub-grantee.

***Note: The process of obtaining or renewing a SAM.gov registration may take anywhere from 4-8 weeks. Please begin your registration as early as possible.***

- Organizations **based in the United States** or that pay employees within the United States will need an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), and a UEI number prior to registering in SAM.gov.
- Organizations **based outside of the United States** and that do not pay employees within the United States do not need an EIN from the IRS but do need a UEI number prior to registering in SAM.gov.
- **Please note that as of November 2022 and February 2022 respectively, organizations based outside of the United States that do not intend to apply for U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) awards are no longer required to have a NATO Commercial and Government Entity (NCAGE) code or CAGE code to apply for non-DoD foreign assistance funding opportunities.** If an applicant organization is mid-registration and wishes to remove a CAGE or NCAGE code from their SAM.gov registration, the applicant should submit a help desk ticket (“incident”) with the Federal Service Desk (FSD) online at [www.fsd.gov](http://www.fsd.gov) using the following language: “I do not intend to seek financial assistance from the Department of Defense. I do not wish to obtain a CAGE or NCAGE code. I understand that I will need to submit my registration after this incident is resolved in order to have my registration activated.”

**Organizations based outside of the United States and that DO NOT plan to do business with the DoD should follow the below instructions:**

Step 1: Proceed to SAM.gov to obtain a UEI and complete the SAM.gov registration process. SAM.gov registration must be renewed annually.

**Organizations based outside of the United States and that DO plan to do business with the DoD in addition to Department of State should follow the below instructions:**

Step 1: Apply for an NCAGE code by following the instructions on the NSPA NATO website linked below:

NCAGE Homepage:

<https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/sc/CageList.aspx>

NCAGE Code Request Tool (NCRT):

### **Exemptions**

An exemption from the UEI and sam.gov registration requirements may be permitted on a case-by-case basis if:

- An applicant's identity must be protected due to potential endangerment of their mission, their organization's status, their employees, or individuals being served by the applicant.
- For an applicant, if the Federal awarding agency makes a determination that there are exigent circumstances that prohibit the applicant from receiving a unique entity identifier and completing SAM registration prior to receiving a Federal award. In these instances, Federal awarding agencies must require the recipient to obtain a unique entity identifier and complete SAM registration within 30 days of the Federal award date.

Organizations requesting exemption from UEI or SAM.gov requirements must email the point of contact listed in the NOFO at least two weeks prior to the deadline in the NOFO providing a justification of their request. Approval for a SAM.gov exemption must come from the warranted Grants Officer before the application can be deemed eligible for review.

### **4. Submission Dates and Times**

The Public Affairs Section will accept proposals throughout the year and will review proposals on a rolling basis, as well as according to the following indicative schedule:

- Proposals received by January 15, 2024, will be reviewed by February 29, 2024, with responses going out by March 15, 2024.
- Proposals received between January 15, 2024, and June 17, 2023, will be reviewed by July 31, 2024, with responses going out by August 15, 2024.

Applications submitted after the **June 17, 2024 deadline** but before August 31, 2024 might also be considered within this NOFO.

## 5. Funding Restrictions

Award funds cannot be used for construction, vehicle purchases and similar investment costs. Also, award funds cannot be used to finance the standard operation of the applicant.

## 6. Other Submission Requirements

All application materials must be submitted by email to [Bratislava\\_GrantsSlovakia@state.gov](mailto:Bratislava_GrantsSlovakia@state.gov).

## E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

### 1. Criteria

Each application will be evaluated and rated on the basis of the evaluation criteria outlined below. The criteria listed are closely related and are considered as a whole in judging the overall quality of an application.

**Relevance and PD objective:** Applicant has clearly described how stated goals are related to and support U.S. Embassy Bratislava's priority areas or target audiences. Applicant has clearly described to what extent does the program contribute to the strengthening of societal and cultural ties between the U.S. and Slovakia.

**US Component:** The program has a clear connection to US persons, institutions, ideas/values.

**Organizational capacity and record on previous grants:** The organization has expertise in its stated field and PAS is confident of its ability to undertake the program. This includes a financial management system and a bank account.

**Quality and Feasibility of the Program Idea:** The program idea is well developed, with detail about how program activities will be carried out. The proposal includes a reasonable implementation timeline. Goals and objectives are clearly stated and program approach is likely to provide maximum impact in achieving the proposed results.

**Budget:** The budget justification is detailed. Costs are reasonable in relation to the proposed activities and anticipated results. The budget is realistic, accounting for all necessary expenses to achieve proposed activities.

**Monitoring, evaluation plan and sustainability:** Applicant demonstrates it is able to measure program success against key indicators and provide milestones to indicate progress toward goals outlined in the proposal. The program includes output and outcome indicators and shows how and when those will be measured. Program activities will continue to have positive impact after the end of the program.

## 2. Review and Selection Process

A Grants Review Committee will evaluate all eligible applications.

## F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

### 1. Federal Award Notices

The grant award or cooperative agreement will be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Grants Officer. The assistance award agreement is the authorizing document and it will be provided to the recipient for review and signature by email. **The recipient may only start incurring program expenses beginning on the start date shown on the grant award document signed by the Grants Officer.**

If a proposal is selected for funding, the Department of State has no obligation to provide any additional future funding. Renewal of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the discretion of the Department of State.

Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. government, nor does it commit the U.S. government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. Further, the U.S. government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received.

**Payment Method:** Payments will be made in at least two installments, as needed to carry out the program activities (generally up to 80% advance and up to 20% reimbursement).

Organizations whose applications will not be funded will also be notified via email.

### 2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

**Terms and Conditions:** Before submitting an application, applicants should review all the terms and conditions and required certifications which will apply to this award, to ensure that they will be able to comply. These include:

2 CFR 200, 2 CFR 600, Certifications and Assurances, and the Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions, all of which are available at: <https://www.state.gov>.

Note the U.S Flag branding and marking requirements in the Standard Terms and Conditions.

### 3. Reporting

**Reporting Requirements:** Recipients will be required to submit program reports. The award document will specify how often these reports must be submitted.

## **G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS**

If you have any questions about the grant application process, please contact PAS at: [Bratislava\\_GrantsSlovakia@state.gov](mailto:Bratislava_GrantsSlovakia@state.gov).

Note: We do not provide any pre-consultation for application related questions that are addressed in the NOFO. Once an application has been submitted, State Department officials and staff — both in the Department and at embassies overseas — may not discuss this competition with applicants until the entire proposal review process is completed.

## **H. OTHER INFORMATION**

### **Guidelines for Budget Justification**

**Personnel:** Describe the wages, salaries, and benefits of temporary or permanent staff who will be working directly for the applicant on the program, and the percentage of their time that will be spent on the program.

**Travel:** Estimate the costs of travel and per diem for this program. If the program involves international travel, include a brief statement of justification for that travel.

**Equipment:** Describe any machinery, furniture, or other personal property that is required for the program, which has a useful life of more than one year (or a life longer than the duration of the program), and costs at least \$5,000 per unit.

**Supplies:** List and describe all the items and materials, including any computer devices, that are needed for the program. If an item costs more than \$5,000 per unit, then put it in the budget under Equipment.

**Contractual:** Describe goods and services that the applicant plans to acquire through a contract with a vendor. Also describe any sub-awards to non-profit partners that will help carry out the program activities.

**Other Direct Costs:** Describe other costs directly associated with the program, which do not fit in the other categories. For example, shipping costs for materials and equipment or applicable taxes. All “Other” or “Miscellaneous” expenses must be itemized and explained.

**Indirect Costs:** These are costs that cannot be linked directly to the program activities, such as overhead costs needed to help keep the organization operating. If your organization has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate (NICRA) and includes NICRA charges in the budget, attach a copy of your latest NICRA. Organizations that have never had a NICRA may request indirect costs of 10% of the modified total direct costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.68.

“Cost Sharing” refers to contributions from the organization or other entities other than the U.S. Embassy. It also includes in-kind contributions such as volunteers’ time and donated venues.

Alcoholic Beverages: Please note that award funds cannot be used for alcoholic beverages.